

Regional Toll Advisory Committee Meeting 4 Public Comments

Received December 2, 2022 – January 20, 2023

Date received	12/5/2022
Source	Email
From	Alan Schlesinger
Subject	Scoping Comments - EMAC, RTAC, STRAC, RMPP Scoping Comment

Hi! Here's my opinion on the tolling plan.

In general, I'm against it due to the fact that it will pose problems for those who can least afford it as well as place undue cost and problems for businesses and independent contractors that deliver items, as well as possible problems for those who live on "alternate" routes that will become more crowded by those wishing to avoid tolls. There may also be a lot of other unforeseen problems as well.

A number of questions come up such as:

1. Will all drivers need to have transponders installed on their cars? At what cost?
2. Will delivery drivers who may have to use the proposed tolling routes many times a day be reimbursed for tolling costs? (Tolls may be supposedly no more than two dollars per tolling spot but this can really add up if these spots are driven past several times daily! And we all know that those tolls will eventually go up!)
3. Just how much will it cost businesses that use fleets of vehicles for deliveries for things such as transponders or any other equipment they may need as a result? And will they be reimbursed in any way?
4. What about transitory drivers such as the person driving from Redding to Seattle for a business or pleasure trip? How will they pay toll if they don't have a transponder, or will they need one installed beforehand?
5. How much additional traffic will clog alternate routes by those who wish to avoid tolls and how will this affect residents and businesses along these routes?

If toll roads are a must, there is a better way.

When Orange County, California introduced toll roads, they didn't toll existing roads but instead built new roads attached to the existing roads. This included toll roads attached to I-5. This way, users could "opt-in" rather than be automatically forced to pay tolls. Those who want to avoid traffic can opt to use the toll roads, and those who don't want to pay tolls or can't afford to pay tolls stay on the non-toll roads and still get to where they want to go.

The main advantage is that those who opt to use the toll roads help add the additional funds that are needed and automatically lessen the traffic on the existing non-toll roads and highways at the same

Memorandum

RTAC Public Comment / December 2, 2022 – January 20, 2023

time, and those who cannot really afford tolls wouldn't have to pay them by staying on the non-tolled roads. Win-win!

In addition, there would likely be far less, if any, traffic on "alternate" routes from drivers trying to avoid tolls!

A similar system, where alternate roads and freeways can be built, or even just special lanes added that would be "tolling" lanes, would help in the Portland area and be a better alternative to tolling all lanes of I-5 and I-205 and would likely be less controversial.

Sure, it would probably take longer to implement and yes, there would be obstacles to overcome, especially if new roads are to be built or existing roads widened to accommodate one or two new "tolling" lanes, but in the long run, it would actually be a better and probably more acceptable and workable plan for those on both sides of the issue.

A special lane, or a separate span on the I-5 and Glenn Jackson bridges would also likely be more acceptable to Washington State, which has expressed concern for residents of Vancouver, many of whom need to go to Portland to work.

I strongly urge ODOT to consider this type of alternative. Talk to the officials in Orange County to see how they worked out the problems also.

I'm certainly not an engineer or technical traffic person, but I am a delivery driver here in the Portland area and I am originally from Southern California and know that the toll roads in Orange County seem to work pretty well without forcing everyone to pay tolls.

If you want to reach me, or have any questions for me, please let me know.

Thanks for letting me have my opinion on this issue.

Date received	12/5/2022
Source	Email
From	Char, Lents Neighborhood Livability Association
Subject	RTAC Public Comment

Dear Committee,

This tolling will ONLY affect the people who HAVE to drive to work...which would be ALMOST all of your blue collar workers who are your low income wage earners, people of color and immigrants. Why do you keep preaching that these are the folks you care about?

Date received	12/7/2022
Source	Email
From	Mitchell Jones
Subject	I 205 questions and concerns

Hello

Memorandum

RTAC Public Comment / December 2, 2022 – January 20, 2023

This is Mitch Jones. I am a Stafford Tualatin Valley CPO board member. I attended the Dec 5 meeting via zoom. I asked questions and was told by the chair that the data is available. I live on Ek Road which is already a major I 205 diversion path.

1. What are the i205 estimated tolls?

These toll levels will be a major factor for causing traffic diversion. These questions were asked at an ODOT and CPO meeting over a year ago and the ODOT response was this would be available around Q1 2022. Nothing has been provided.

2. What do the traffic diversion studies show both during construction and once the project is complete?

What are the diversion mitigation plans?

3.as commissioner Savas suggested in the meeting, what is the ongoing means to monitor traffic diversion ?

4. What will be done to help local residents with the toll costs so that those of us who have to use the 205 often multiple times per day for shopping and to go to work, take kids to school daily are not unfairly impacted. It is bad enough that traffic diversion on our home streets will be unarguably be occurring but also adding costs should not be unfairly applied to local residents

I look forward to the answers. I need to report back in the Hamlet and CPO meeting on next Tuesday December 13. I hope for feedback by then

Thank you very much

Date received	12/9/2022
Source	Email
From	Cindy Belles
Subject	RTAC Public Comment

If the purpose of tolling I-205 is to reduce congestion, then why charge tolling at 2:00 am when there is no traffic?

How will charging people to drive on I-205 during rush hours reduce traffic when most don't have a choice of the hours they work/commute? All it will do is inflict financial pain on the people who need to get to work, and the traffic congestion will remain the same. Public transportation isn't an option for most people, and bus routes don't even exist in a lot of places. Tri-Met is discontinuing routes in Tualatin and Sherwood, as a matter of fact. We don't live in New York City where a subway system can take you practically door-to-door to where you need to go, so I wish Metro and ODOT would stop acting as if we do.

I've heard that as much as 60% of the revenue from tolls will be spent on the collection of them. That's insane and incredibly wasteful. This tolling plan should be scrapped if so much of the money you are charging drivers is going toward anything other than infrastructure improvements.

Diversion off of freeways is going to paralyze the towns of Willamette and Oregon City. The gridlock on side streets in the area will be disastrous. It's not fair to make the existing residents and business people drive over a thousand speed bumps that you've installed to discourage diversion, either.

I would really like someone to address my questions/comments. ODOT representatives seem to ignore these legitimate concerns or give canned answers like telling everyone to take the bus or ride

Memorandum

RTAC Public Comment / December 2, 2022 – January 20, 2023

a bike – well, that doesn't work for my mobility-challenged 80-year-old mother and a lot of other people too.

Please enter my comments into the public record.

Please reply.

Date received	12/12/2022
Source	Email
From	David Garen
Subject	RTAC Public Comment -- personal privacy concerns with tolling

I am opposed to tolling with electronic surveillance for several reasons related to personal privacy and choice:

* I OBJECT to having my comings and goings monitored and logged into a database. I find such surveillance creepy, intrusive, subject to possible abuse, and an invasion of my privacy.

* I OBJECT to having to have an electronic account. It assumes that, for all practical purposes, everyone has ready access to the internet and is comfortable using it. It is a hassle to have to create and maintain another computer account with another username and password to keep track of. Plus, more importantly, storing my personal and financial information is yet another place subject to hacking and identity theft risks.

* I OBJECT to having no option but to engage the tolling system in order to go into or return from Washington within the Portland metro area.

* I OBJECT on behalf of visitors and passers-through who will be subject to the hassle of the tolling system -- by the surveillance, by having to create an account, or by receiving a bill.

For these reasons of personal privacy and choice, then, I strongly object to tolling via electronic surveillance. I rarely see these reasons cited in the various newspaper articles I have read on this subject, yet these reasons are the most important to me.

Date received	12/16/2022
Source	Email
From	Heather Walker-Dale
Subject	RTAC public comment

Dear all,

I live in Clackamas county and strongly oppose the proposed tolls on both I-5 and I-205 as (an exorbitant) means of regressive taxation often on those who can least afford it. Tolling disproportionately harms lower-income people who need to drive, sometimes long distances, for work. As Research Fellow at The University Transportation Research Center Jonathan Peters has noted, tolling "is a regressive form of taxation. This can be very, very painful for a low-income household," Peters said. "It could be the straw that breaks the camel's back for the working poor."

Memorandum

RTAC Public Comment / December 2, 2022 – January 20, 2023

Additionally, tolling disrupts local communities as drivers search for alternate toll-free roadways that were not built for such traffic volumes.

There are MANY other ways to raise funds for road projects that come with many fewer drawbacks and disruptions, and I urge you to explore those alternatives, again if necessary, in place of tolling. I know of no Oregon resident in my community that welcomes this and many who are worried about daily concerns like collecting groceries if such tolls come into effect.

Date received	12/19/2022
Source	Email
From	Gerald & Susan Baker
Subject	RTAC: I-5 tolls impacting Charbonneau

Hello Oregon RTAC Tolling Team,

I am a retired 76-year-old Charbonneau resident and I am very concerned about the impact of I-5 tolling on the Boone Bridge on my expenses and our community broadly. Charbonneau, which is part of the town of Wilsonville, lies just south of the Boone Bridge. My wife and I cross the Boone Bridge every day to shop, pick up grandkids, go to the doctor and many other reasons. Charbonneau is isolated from just about everything by the Boone Bridge and tolling on the bridge would be financially very damaging for all of us in Charbonneau on fixed incomes. I recognize the need for Oregon to generate income for highway maintenance and expansion but putting a toll reader on the bridge would be a huge hardship on all 3,000 Charbonneau residents. If I-5 tolling is implemented, two solutions for Charbonneau residents would be acceptable: (A) moving the toll reader north or south of the bridge, or (B) granting Charbonneau residents an exemption from paying tolls when crossing the Boone Bridge. Please consider providing a solution to avoid the extreme hardship on Charbonneau residents like my wife and me when planning the tolling network.

Thank you for your consideration!!

Date received	1/3/2023
Source	Email
From	Norene Quam
Subject	RTAC Public Comment: Tolling on I5 @ the Boones Bridge

I understand the Oregon Department of Transportation has added the Boones Bridge on I-5 south of Wilsonville to its list of sites for tolling. I am writing in an effort to stop that plan.

I live in Charbonneau, a community of mostly senior citizens. I travel the Boones Bridge multiple times a week. It is the ONLY available way to get to Wilsonville where I bank, buy groceries, get gas, pick up prescriptions, use the library, attend fitness classes, stop at the post office, visit friends, etc. I am on a fixed income and having to pay a toll every time I left my home to go literally anywhere would be a serious hardship.

I know for a fact that Charbonneau residents already schedule their trips over the bridge to avoid high traffic times. So if forcing drivers to adjust their travel times, I believe everyone who has that option, already does so.

Memorandum

RTAC Public Comment / December 2, 2022 – January 20, 2023

I understand the need for ODOT to raise funds, but putting a toll in I-5 at the Boones Bridge location would not only have a devastating financial impact on the Charbonneau residents, it would create even more traffic nightmares than already exist.

PLEASE reconsider placing a toll on the Boones Bridge. If a toll must happen on I-5, I suggest somewhere north of the 217 interchange.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this email.

Date received	1/3/2023
Source	Email
From	Sherrill Dye
Subject	RTAC Public Comment Fwd: tolling at Boone Bridge on I-5 Wilsonville

Dear ODOT:

I oppose any tolling on I-5 at the Boone Bridge in Wilsonville that would require residents of Charbonneau to pay tolls for crossing the Willamette River to travel from their homes to Wilsonville. I-5 at the Boone Bridge has two separate identities and serves these very distinct needs: (1) a major West Coast Highway and (2) a local main arterial linking the Charbonneau neighborhood to the rest of Wilsonville.

I live in Charbonneau, south of the Boone Bridge; but all health care providers, grocers, the library, government offices, gas stations, post office (and the multiple other businesses and services used by me and by my neighbors), are north of the Bridge. Short of swimming or boating across the Willamette River, I have no alternate means of traveling to "Main Street Wilsonville." So if one of ODOT's goals is to reduce traffic on I-5, that goal can't be realized for Charbonneau residents who have no choice but to use I-5 to get to the main part of Wilsonville.

Requiring Charbonneau residents to pay tolls to travel to the rest of their city is unjust and unjustifiable.

If ODOT insists upon instituting a tolling program on I-5 at the Boone Bridge, I suggest that all Charbonneau residents be issued stickers for their vehicles -- readable by the tolling machinery (as what is done in California) -- allowing them to pass through any tollgates without cost.

Sincerely,

Sherry Dye

Date received	1/9/2023
Source	Email
From	Ed Truax
Subject	Regional Toll Advisory Committee (RTAC) Scoping Comment

Please come to your senses about tolling.

I served on the Tualatin City Council for 16 years and have an "in the trenches", well-informed opinion about your proposed tolling on I205 and I5 in the Southwest Metropolitan area.

Memorandum

RTAC Public Comment / December 2, 2022 – January 20, 2023

Your tolls will cripple the Cities of West Linn, Lake Oswego, Tualatin, and to some extent Oregon City and Wilsonville. The benefits cited by your "transportation experts" will pale in comparison to the damage caused. Please stop looking for a way to justify tolling and consider the impacts on your citizens who vote.

I know you have already decided to proceed, but you can at least save the people who care about our communities the hassle of collecting signatures to place this on a ballot where it should have been in the first place.

--
Ed Truax

Date received	1/17/2023
Source	Email
From	Leticia Davies
Subject	RTAC Public Comment

Hello board persons,

I am a clackamas county resident living in oregon city.

I believe that in the future, the public meetings should be held in the affected county so that impacted citizens can more easily attend these meetings.

I believe that there should be much more improvement on all side streets in oregon city as well as ways to access west Lynn from oregon city. As it stands the oregon city bridge to West Linn (the bridge that is off main street in oregon city) is currently over-burdened and with the implementation of tolls this will only increase. This puts undue burden on the residents of oregon city who will be disproportionately affected by this new toll.

At this time I am wholeheartedly against the tolling system as I can see a lot of negative impact to come for my community with congestion and heavy traffic on poorly maintained side roads that will be utilized to avoid the tolls. I have seen little information on solutions for oregon city residents and hope that there will be a robust plan in place to mitigate financial impact to oregon city residents by this new toll that we did not have a choice in.

I have been disappointed that this new toll (tax) was implemented without a vote by oregon citizens, and I continue to hope that the state will stop further progress on this tolling until voted upon by oregon citizens.

Again, my disappointment in this state, that I call home, could not be greater at this moment.

Please do better.

-Leticia Davies
503-816-3096